

will fulfill its stewardship of the natural resources of the National Forest System to fulfill the designated purposes of the national forests and grasslands and honor their unique place in American life. The regulations in this subpart set forth a process for amending and revising land and resource management plans, hereafter referred to as plans, for the National Forest System and for monitoring the results of plan implementation under the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Act of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976, 16 U.S.C. 1600 *et seq.* The regulations in this subpart also guide the selection and implementation of site-specific actions. The principal authorities governing the development and the management of the National Forest System include: the Organic Administration Act of 1897, as amended (16 U.S.C. 473 *et seq.*); the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 (16 U.S.C. 528 *et seq.*); the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1121 *et seq.*); the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*); the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*); the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resource Act of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1600 *et seq.*); and the Clean Water Act of 1948, as amended by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1977 and the Water Quality Act of 1987 and other laws (33 U.S.C. 1251 *et seq.*, 1323 *et seq.*).

(b) The National Forest System constitutes an extraordinary national legacy created by people of vision and preserved for future generations by diligent and far-sighted public servants and citizens. These are the peoples' lands, emblems of the nation's democratic traditions.

(1) The national forests and grasslands provide a wide variety of uses, values, products, and services that are important to many people, including outdoor recreation, forage, timber, wildlife and fish, biological diversity, productive soils, clean air and water, and minerals. They also afford intangible benefits such as beauty, inspiration, and wonder.

(2) To assure the continuation of this array of benefits this regulation affirms sustainability as the overall goal for stewardship of the natural resources of each national forest and grassland consistent with the laws that guide management of these lands.

(3) Sustainability, composed of interdependent ecological, social, and economic elements, embodies the principles of multiple-use and sustained-yield without impairment to the productivity of the land. Sustainability means meeting needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Planning contributes to social and economic sustainability without compromising the basic composition, structure, and functioning of ecological systems. The progress toward achievement of sustainability is assessed through monitoring and evaluation.

§219.2 Principles.

The planning regulations in this subpart are based on the following principles:

(a) The first priority for planning to guide management of the National Forest System is to maintain or restore ecological sustainability of national forests and grasslands to provide for a wide variety of uses, values, products, and services. The benefits sought from these lands depend upon long-term ecological sustainability. Considering increased human uses, it is essential that uses of today do not impair the functioning of ecological processes and the ability of these natural resources to contribute to sustainability in the future.

(1) Planning provides the guidance for maintaining or restoring the diversity of plant and animal communities and the productive capacity of ecological systems, the core elements of ecological sustainability.

(2) Planning is based on science and other knowledge, including the use of scientifically based strategies for sustainability and benefits from independent scientific peer review.

(3) Planning is based on the temporal and spatial scales necessary for sustainability.

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(4) Planning includes the monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of goals.

(b) Planning contributes to social and economic sustainability by providing for a wide variety of uses, values, products, and services without compromising the basic composition, structure, and function of ecological systems.

(1) Planning recognizes and fosters a broad-based understanding of the interdependence of national forests and grasslands with economies and communities.

(2) Planning fosters strategies and actions that provide for human use in ways that contribute to long-term sustainability.

(c) Planning is efficiently integrated into the broader geographic, legal, and social landscape within which national forests and grasslands exist. Other agencies, governments, corporations, and citizens manage land in and around the national forests and grasslands. Planning, therefore, is outward looking with the goal of understanding the broader landscape in which the national forests and grasslands lie.

(1) Planning fosters coordination among all affected federal agencies.

(2) Planning proceeds in close cooperation with state, tribal, and local governments.

(3) Planning recognizes the rights of American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives.

(4) Planning is interdisciplinary, providing analyses and options that are responsive to a broad range of ecological, social, and economic.

(5) Planning acknowledges the limits and variability of likely budgets.

(d) Planning meaningfully engages the American people in the stewardship of their national forests and grasslands. Just as the Forest Service can help the American people learn about the limits and capabilities of the national forests and grasslands, managers also should be guided by the knowledge and values of the American people.

(1) Planning encourages extensive collaborative citizen participation and builds upon the human resources in local communities and throughout the nation.

(2) Planning actively seeks and addresses key issues and promotes a shared vision of desired conditions.

(3) Planning and plans are understandable.

(4) Planning restores and maintains the trust of the American people in the management of the national forests and grasslands.

(e) Planning is an ongoing process, where decisions are adapted, as necessary, to address new issues, new information, and unforeseen events.

(1) Planning is innovative and practical.

(2) Planning is expeditious and efficient in achieving goals.

(f) Planning seeks to manage National Forest System resources in a combination that best serves the public interest without impairment of the productivity of the land consistent with the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960.

THE FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING

§219.3 Overview.

(a) *The planning framework.* Land and resource management planning is a flexible process for fitting solutions to the scope and scale of needed action. Planning, conducted according to the planning framework outlined in §§219.3–219.11, involves engaging the public (§§219.12–219.18) and applying the best available science (§§219.22–219.25) to contribute to sustainability (§§219.19–219.21) in the use and enjoyment of National Forest System lands.

(b) *Levels of planning.* Planning may be undertaken at the national, regional, national forest or grassland, and/or ranger district administrative levels depending on the scope and scale of issues.

(1) The Chief of the Forest Service is responsible for national planning. National planning includes the Forest Service national strategic plan required under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (5 U.S.C. 306, 31 U.S.C. 1115–1119 and 9703–9704) that establishes national long-term goals, outcome measures, and strategies to be considered in managing the National Forest System and the Resources Planning Act Program (16 U.S.C. 1600).